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THE SUPREME COUNCIL FOR  
Motherhood  
& Childhood



يوم الطفل الإماراتي  
EMIRATI CHILDREN'S DAY

مارس 15 March

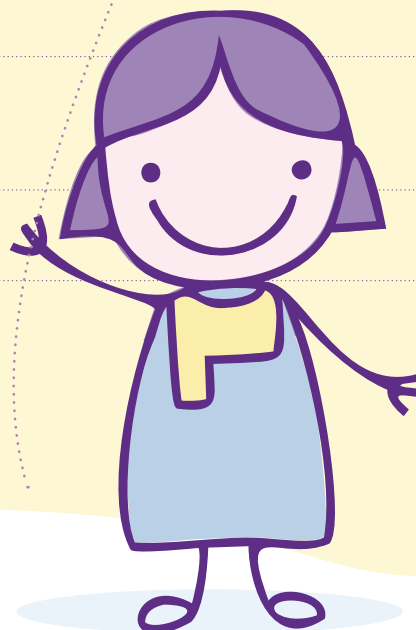


The Right to  
Digital  
Knowledge  
2026



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## Introduction

Children in the United Arab Emirates grow up in an advanced digital environment where technology has become an integral part of everyday life. Digital technologies are no longer merely tools for accessing information; they now represent spaces for learning, interaction, creativity, and knowledge creation. They also play a growing role in shaping children's personalities, developing their skills, and preparing them for the future.

The UAE celebrates Emirati Children's Day on 15 March each year, following the directives of Her Highness Sheikha Fatima bint Mubarak, Chairwoman of the General Women's Union, President of the Supreme Council for Motherhood and Childhood, and Supreme Chairwoman of the Family Development Foundation, "Mother of the Nation." This national occasion reflects the UAE's commitment to protecting children's rights and supporting their wellbeing across health, educational, psychological, and social dimensions. Children remain at the heart of the nation's development journey and represent a strategic investment in the future of society.





In 2026, Emirati Children's Day is celebrated under the theme **"The Right to Digital Knowledge"**. The theme reflects a reality in which technology has become a core element in children's learning, communication, interaction, and creativity. It signals a shift in focus from simply providing access to technology toward empowering children to understand it and engage with it consciously and responsibly.

This approach reflects a national vision that seeks to prepare individuals capable of navigating rapid technological change while maintaining a balance between benefiting from digital opportunities and protecting values, identity, and privacy. This direction aligns with national legislation and the UAE's international commitments regarding the protection of children's rights.



The celebration of this right extends throughout the year, aiming to promote a culture of safe digital knowledge and strengthen children's ability to learn, explore, and contribute positively within a comprehensive ecosystem that includes families, educational institutions, and society.



This guide serves as a practical reference for entities organizing programs, initiatives, and activities throughout 2026. Its purpose is to translate the theme into sustainable practices, encourage coordination among national stakeholders, and reinforce the UAE's leadership in empowering children within a modern digital society.



## The Digital Context and Emerging Challenges

The world is experiencing rapid digital transformation, where the digital environment has become a central component of children's lives, learning experiences, and daily interactions.

In the United Arab Emirates - one of the leading countries globally in adopting advanced technologies - children grow up in an integrated digital society that relies extensively on artificial intelligence, digital services, online education, and interactive applications.

Recognizing these developments, the UAE has taken early steps to prepare future generations. Artificial intelligence concepts and technologies have been incorporated into school curricula from kindergarten through Grade 12 beginning with the 2025–2026 academic year. At the same time, the country has strengthened its legislative framework through a set of laws, most notably the Child Rights Law (Wadeema's Law) and related legislation that protects children and ensures their safety in digital environments.





Despite this progress, the expansion of digital connectivity and the widespread use of smart devices also present growing challenges. As children increasingly interact within digital spaces, their exposure to online risks rises. Studies indicate that children may encounter inappropriate or harmful content online, including materials unsuitable for their age groups. Approximately 72% of children between the ages of 8 and 12 use smartphones daily, reflecting the deep integration of digital life into their everyday routines.

Globally, more than 175,000 children access the internet for the first time every day, underscoring the emergence of what is often referred to as “Generation Beta.” This generation grows up in an environment shaped by algorithms and artificial intelligence that influence how information, content, and communication are produced and distributed.

In this context, the challenge is no longer about ensuring access to technology - access already exists. The greater challenge lies in enabling children to understand digital technologies and interact with them responsibly.





While information has become widely accessible, verifying its accuracy has become more complex. The diversity of online content increases the potential for misinformation, while fast-paced digital interaction may expose children to risks such as exploitation, cyberbullying, or privacy violations.

The UAE's digital landscape illustrates both technological progress and the need for vigilance. In 2024, 173.7 million digital government transactions were completed, and more than 57 million users benefited from 1,419 digital services, achieving a satisfaction rate of 91%. At the same time, authorities detect and prevent between 90,000 and more than 200,000 cyberattacks daily, while 128 cybersecurity incidents were recorded since the beginning of 2026.

In this context, the concept of "The Right to Digital Knowledge" emerges as a response to these realities. It shifts the focus from protecting children from technology to empowering them to use it responsibly and confidently, balancing the opportunities of the digital world with protection from its risks within a framework consistent with national legislation and international commitments to child protection.





## What is the Right to Digital Knowledge?

The right to digital knowledge refers to empowering children to engage with digital technologies and content in a conscious and responsible manner. It enhances their ability to learn, think critically, and participate positively, while safeguarding their identity, privacy, and dignity.

This right extends beyond simply using technology. It includes understanding the nature of digital environments, how digital systems function, and the ability to evaluate information and distinguish reliable sources from misleading ones. It also involves making balanced decisions when interacting, publishing, or sharing content online. Developing ethical digital knowledge includes:

- ① **Understanding that online content may be algorithmically curated or generated**, and recognizing the influence of artificial intelligence on what children see and what is recommended to them.
- ② **Practicing responsible digital behavior** built on respect, avoiding harmful communication, and recognizing the impact of words, images, and shared content on others.
- ③ **Protecting privacy, personal data, and digital identity** by avoiding the sharing of personal information or images without awareness or consent.
- ④ **Verifying information before sharing it** by evaluating sources and avoiding the spread of rumors or misleading information.
- ⑤ **Using digital technologies safely** by avoiding online risks, reporting concerning content or interactions, and seeking assistance when necessary.



## Objectives of Emirati Children's Day 2026

- ① **Strengthen children's digital knowledge** and enable them to learn, innovate, and participate positively within the digital society.
- ② **Enhance children's digital judgement and critical thinking skills** (including the ability to verify information and understand the influence of algorithms), thereby reducing exposure to misinformation and inappropriate content.
- ③ **Protect children's privacy and digital identity** through clear preventive practices within families, schools, and community institutions.
- ④ **Increase the readiness of families and educational institutions** to guide and supervise children effectively and support balanced digital behavior.
- ⑤ **Promote a coordinated national approach** that aligns the roles of relevant entities, ensures consistent messaging, and supports sustainable impact.





### **Expected Outcomes to promoting the right to digital knowledge:**

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- ① Strengthen children's self-confidence and foster a positive digital identity.
- ① Improve learning quality and innovation through productive use of digital technologies for research, exploration, and problem solving.
- ① Reduce children's exposure to digital risks by strengthening preventive awareness and encouraging reporting and support mechanisms.
- ① Promote psychological and social wellbeing by reducing cyberbullying and pressures resulting from uncontrolled digital use.
- ① Encourage responsible digital citizenship grounded in respect for societal values, laws, and national responsibilities.
- ① Prepare children for future participation in a digital economy driven by knowledge and artificial intelligence.
- ① Support family and educational stability through clear roles and responsibilities between children, families, and educational institutions.
- ① Promote ethical use of technology that balances innovation with responsibility.



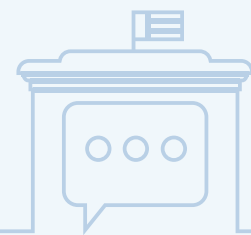
## Who Can Participate?

Promoting children's right to digital knowledge is a shared national responsibility. Participation from federal and local government entities, educational institutions, private sector organizations, technology companies, media institutions, and the broader community is essential to strengthening safe digital culture.

Participation also includes families, children themselves, specialists in education, information technology and cybersecurity, as well as cultural institutions, libraries, and community centers, all of which contribute to raising national awareness about digital safety.

### Government Entities and Relevant Authorities

- ① Develop policies and legislation to protect children in digital environments.
- ① Provide reporting channels and response mechanisms for digital incidents.
- ① Implement national awareness and capacity-building programs.
- ① Coordinate efforts among stakeholders to ensure unified messaging and practices.





### **Educational Institutions (Schools and Universities)**

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- ⦿ Integrate digital knowledge and technology ethics into educational activities.
- ⦿ Monitor students' digital behavior within educational environments. In addition to raising awareness about digital risks and reporting mechanisms.
- ⦿ Engage parents in guidance and follow-up.

### **Families and Caregivers**

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- ⦿ Provide daily supervision and guidance for children's use of technology.
- ⦿ Maintain open dialogue about children's digital experiences.
- ⦿ Establish time limits and behavioral guidelines for technology use.
- ⦿ Seek support and report concerns when digital risks arise.





## Digital Platforms and Service Providers

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- ⦿ Provide appropriate safety and privacy settings for children, and develop parental control tools and reporting mechanisms.
- ⦿ Remove harmful content and respond to reports.
- ⦿ Comply with national legislation concerning children's data.

## Media and Community Institutions

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- ⦿ Publish awareness content that promotes responsible digital behavior.
- ⦿ Support national campaigns and educational programs.
- ⦿ Provide community initiatives aimed at children and families.



## Children

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- ⦿ Practice responsible online behavior and respect others.
- ⦿ Protect their personal information and avoid sharing it without awareness.
- ⦿ Inform a trusted adult if they encounter harmful or concerning online interactions.
- ⦿ Contribute positively to promoting the goals of digital knowledge.



## The National Framework for the Right to Digital Knowledge

The right to digital knowledge aligns with the UAE's strategic direction toward building an advanced digital society grounded in knowledge and innovation. It complements the country's national and international commitments to protecting and empowering children.

The framework is based on national legislation related to digital environments and data protection and aligns with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Its guiding principles include:

### The Best Interests of the Child

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Ensuring the protection and wellbeing of children physically, psychologically, and intellectually, remains the foundation of all digital policies and practices.



### Proactive Protection

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Prevention is prioritized through early awareness, clear reporting mechanisms, and safeguards against exploitation, cyberbullying, and harmful content.



## Privacy and Data Governance

Children's personal data, images, and digital identities must be protected and processed according to legal frameworks that safeguard dignity and rights in digital environments.

## Access to Information and Participation

Children should be able to engage with digital content safely, obtain appropriate information, express their views, and participate responsibly while being protected from harm or discrimination.



## Advanced Digital Empowerment

This includes building critical thinking skills, understanding technologies and artificial intelligence, strengthening digital identity, and encouraging responsible participation in digital society.

## Institutional Coordination and Legislative Alignment

Achieving this right requires coordinated roles among relevant institutions, with families playing a central role and policies aligned with national legislation and international obligations.



## Legal and Regulatory Framework

### Child Rights Law (Wadeema's Law)

The Federal Child Rights Law **affirms children's right to knowledge, innovation, and creativity**, and obliges authorities to provide the programs necessary to support these rights. In the modern context, digital knowledge represents an extension of these rights. The law also guarantees children's right to express themselves and prohibits arbitrary interference with their correspondence or violations of their honor or reputation.

With regard to digital protection, **the law criminalizes the production, distribution, possession, or facilitation of access to child pornography through any means, including digital platforms**. It also establishes operational protection mechanisms through child protection units and requires educators, healthcare professionals, and social workers to report any violations affecting children.





## Child Digital Safety Law

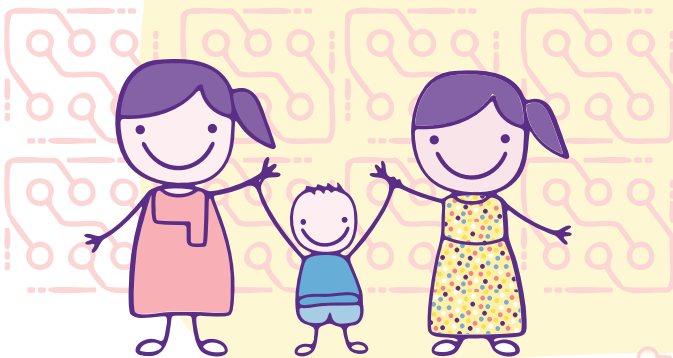
This law establishes objectives closely linked to the concept of digital knowledge, built on three key pillars:

1. Providing safe and appropriate digital content for children.
2. Raising awareness of children's rights and responsibilities in digital environments.
3. Defining the roles and responsibilities of relevant stakeholders.

The law also imposes obligations on digital platforms, including:

- ⦿ Applying the highest privacy settings by default for children's accounts.
- ⦿ Providing filtering tools and age-based content classification.
- ⦿ Regulating targeted advertising.
- ⦿ Offering parental control tools and screen-time management options.
- ⦿ Providing clear and accessible reporting mechanisms.
- ⦿ Using artificial intelligence technologies to proactively detect harmful content.
- ⦿ Reporting child exploitation materials or harmful content to authorities.

The law also governs children's data protection, prohibiting the collection, processing, or sharing of personal data of children under the age of 13 without explicit, verifiable parental consent that can be withdrawn easily.





## **Personal Data Protection Law and Cybercrime Legislation**

The Personal Data Protection Law regulates the processing of personal data according to principles such as fairness, transparency, purpose limitation, data minimization, and security. It also grants individuals rights including access to information, data transfer, correction, deletion, restriction of processing, and objection to automated decision-making.

These provisions require institutions, particularly government and educational sectors—to implement internal governance systems that ensure children's data is properly protected.

The Law on Combating Rumors and Cybercrimes provides a deterrent legal framework against digital threats affecting children. It criminalizes actions such as encouraging or assisting children to produce or distribute pornographic content online, as well as violations of privacy, cyber extortion, identity impersonation, and other offenses that threaten children's safety in digital environments.



## National Policies

### National Digital Accessibility Policy

The National Digital Accessibility Policy aims to create an inclusive society free from barriers by ensuring that people of determination and older individuals can access digital services.

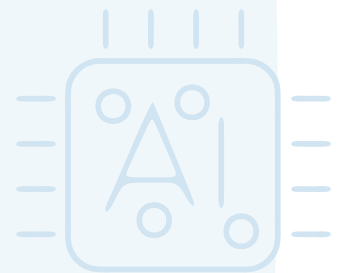
The policy includes commitments related to awareness, training, and accessibility standards, which are particularly relevant when addressing the digital knowledge needs of children with disabilities or those facing challenges accessing digital learning content.

### Educational Transformation and Artificial Intelligence

The Ministry of Education announced the introduction of Artificial Intelligence as a subject in government schools from kindergarten to Grade 12 starting in the 2025–2026 academic year.

The UAE is among the first countries in the world to introduce AI as part of the national curriculum. The program includes age-appropriate modules covering topics such as data, algorithms, ethical awareness, real-world applications, algorithmic bias, and prompt engineering.

Educational policies also include mechanisms for addressing violence and bullying, including cyberbullying, with response procedures linked to child protection units. These measures represent an important governance element within schools to ensure a safe digital learning environment.



## Implementation Proposals

The initiatives presented in this guide serve as illustrative examples intended to help organizations translate the theme “The Right to Digital Knowledge” into practical programs and activities.

Entities are encouraged to adapt these proposals according to their institutional roles and target audiences. Initiatives should align with national legislation and principles of protection and empowerment while ensuring clear reporting mechanisms, responsible supervision, documentation of activities, and consideration of children’s age groups and needs.

### Community Awareness Track

#### Family-Oriented Initiatives

- ① Guidance workshops on digital supervision and parental control tools.
- ① Family digital dialogue sessions discussing children’s online experiences.
- ① Household device-use agreements.
- ① Family digital awareness guides (printed or digital).





### **Community Initiatives**

- ⦿ Awareness campaigns on privacy, data protection, and reporting mechanisms.
- ⦿ Digital festivals or events showcasing children's work and discussing digital issues.
- ⦿ Media content production such as videos, illustrations, and storytelling initiatives.
- ⦿ Public awareness of official reporting channels and support services.

### **Educational Empowerment Track**

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#### **Developing Children's Digital Skills**

- ⦿ Integrating digital citizenship and technology ethics within classroom activities.
- ⦿ Training students to verify information and address misinformation.
- ⦿ Explaining how algorithms and artificial intelligence function.
- ⦿ Developing critical thinking and decision-making skills.

#### **Preparing the Educational Workforce**

- ⦿ Training teachers to address digital incidents.
- ⦿ Establishing school policies for digital safety and reporting mechanisms.
- ⦿ Engaging parents in guidance and monitoring.



### **Extracurricular Activities**

- ⦿ Programming, robotics, and innovation clubs.
- ⦿ Competitions promoting responsible digital content creation.
- ⦿ Student “Digital Safety Ambassador” initiatives.
- ⦿ School Digital Citizenship Week.

### **Protection and Practical Application Track**

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#### **Applied Experiences**

- ⦿ Visits to innovation and cybersecurity centers.
- ⦿ Introductory AI exploration labs.
- ⦿ Fact-checking challenges focused on verifying sources.
- ⦿ Projects addressing secure digital identity.

#### **Child Participation**

- ⦿ Responsible content creator programs.
- ⦿ Digital storytelling sessions reflecting children’s experiences.
- ⦿ Student-led initiatives promoting ethical digital behavior.



## Annual Recognition of Outstanding Initiatives

At the end of each Emirati Children's Day cycle under the theme "The Right to Digital Knowledge", and before the launch of the following year's theme, a final stage is dedicated to recognizing outstanding initiatives and practices that successfully translated the theme into meaningful and sustainable action.

This recognition serves to acknowledge the efforts of participating entities and highlight initiatives that achieved tangible impact in advancing the objectives of the theme. It also provides an opportunity to showcase inspiring experiences and share lessons learned before transitioning to the next cycle.

Recognition includes annual fixed categories, as well as categories linked specifically to the theme of the year.





## **Fixed Categories**

### **Celebrating Them... A Joy for Them**

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Awarded to the best decoration or initiative organized by institutions, entities, or individuals across the country in celebration of Emirati Children's Day through interactive activities and educational or recreational programs that bring joy to children and strengthen national belonging.

### **The Voice of Childhood... The Echo of Media**

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Awarded for outstanding media content (television, print, or social media) that effectively highlights Emirati Children's Day and communicates its message.





## **Theme-Specific Categories**

### **Child-Led Initiative**

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Awarded to the best project or digital campaign led by children or students that reflects the objectives of digital knowledge.

### **Conscious and Responsible Digital Environment**

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Awarded to entities that implemented integrated practices combining protection and empowerment through policies, tools, or programs that help children understand digital risks and use technology responsibly.

### **Best Educational Initiative in Digital Knowledge**

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Awarded to educational initiatives that successfully integrate digital knowledge, technology ethics, and artificial intelligence into learning experiences while strengthening critical thinking and positive participation among children.

### **Technological Innovation Supporting Children's Digital Knowledge**

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Awarded to organizations that developed technological solutions or digital applications using advanced technologies or artificial intelligence to improve children's digital understanding and experience while respecting ethical and data protection principles.



## Conclusion

The Right to Digital Knowledge represents an advanced step in the UAE's efforts to empower children. The challenge today is no longer limited to providing access to technology; it now centers on building children's awareness and strengthening their ability to understand, evaluate, and participate responsibly in digital environments.

This guide reflects a national approach based on the integration of protection and empowerment, supported by coordinated roles among families, educational institutions, government entities, and society as a whole. Together, these efforts contribute to building a safe digital environment that supports children's intellectual, social, and ethical development.

Translating this right into practical initiatives will help prepare a generation that is digitally capable, ethically grounded, and confident in navigating technological change. In doing so, the UAE continues to strengthen its position as a leading model in protecting and empowering children in the digital age.

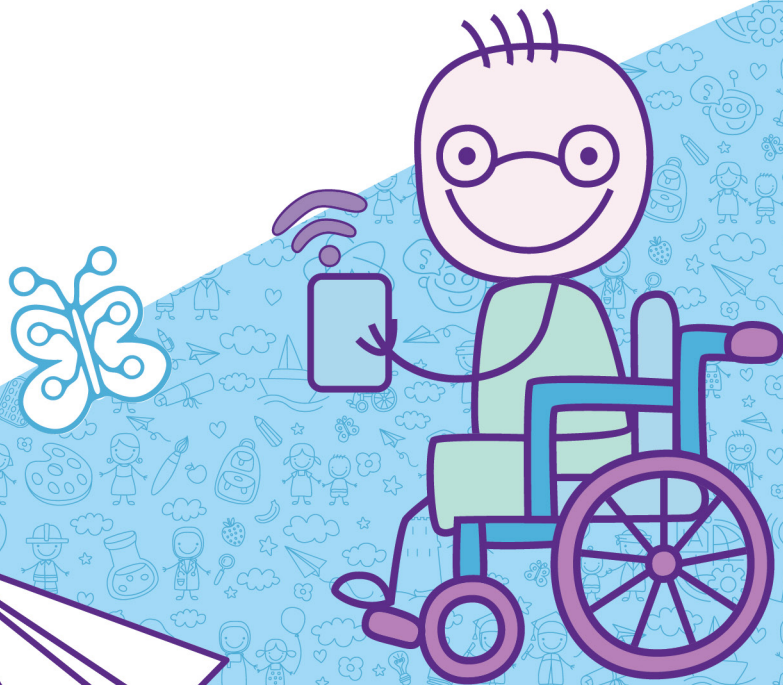




## Sources

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- ① 71.4% of cyber threats targeting the UAE are attributed to state-backed actors
- ① The UAE continues to rank among the world's leading countries in digital transformation
- ① Ministry of Education introduces Artificial Intelligence as a subject for students in government schools
- ① UAE Child Rights Law (Wadeema's Law)
- ① UAE Child Digital Safety Law
- ① UAE Personal Data Protection Law
- ① Law on Combating Rumours and Cybercrimes
- ① Law Establishing the Supreme Council for Motherhood and Childhood
- ① National Digital Accessibility Policy
- ① Digital Academy
- ① Children face rising online threats, UAE Cybersecurity Council warns
- ① Online dangers for children – and how parents and schools are addressing them
- ① UAE's Child Digital Safety Law: A global model for protecting children online



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